

Epidemic/Pandemic Policy

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| Policy number | WHS01 | Version | March 2022 |
| Drafted by | Cheryl Bollard | Approved by Council | 23 March 2022 |
| Responsible persons | Co-Epidemic Officers | Scheduled review date | March 2023 |

1. Introduction

From time-to-time infectious diseases develop into epidemics or pandemics and create increased risks for the community. These occasions require specific policies targeted at the particular disease in question and general efforts at preparedness.

- 1.1 Family History ACT (FHACTION) wishes as far as possible to protect its clients, volunteers, and the general public from infection or contagion by epidemics and/or pandemics whilst on our premises or at FHACTION sanctioned events.
- 1.2 FHACTION will facilitate, through its policies and procedures, strategies designed to reduce risks to its members, its volunteers, and the general public whilst on our premises or at FHACTION sanctioned events.
- 1.3 FHACTION will comply with all directions from authorised public health officers and recognised medical authorities in relation to the epidemic or pandemic.
- 1.4 This policy falls with FHACTION's Risk Management processes and is under the supervision of the FHACTION Council.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the strategies and actions FHACTION intends to take to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases that are epidemics or pandemics and control the transmission of infectious diseases when a case/s is identified.

For the purpose of this policy, infectious diseases mean diseases caused by pathogenic microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi; the diseases can be spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another. This policy is focused on infectious diseases that are declared to be an epidemic or pandemic.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to:

| Council | Volunteers | Members | Visitors |
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| ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

4. Policy

4.1 FHACT will as far as possible, plan for and make advance preparations for the possibility that its operations will be affected by an epidemic or pandemic.

4.2 In the event of an epidemic or pandemic, FHACT will, as far as possible:

- Assist its volunteers, members and others, as relevant, to minimise their exposure to the illness concerned.
- Encourage those who have reason to believe that they are at risk of contracting the epidemic or pandemic to obtain a diagnosis and to seek treatment, where appropriate.
- Support volunteers and members to take reasonable precautions to prevent infection or contagion.
- Require employees, contractors and clients to take reasonable precautions to prevent infection or contagion.
- Provide personal protection measures for volunteers and members as required.
- Maintain its services and operations wherever possible throughout the period of concern.

4.3 In the event of an infectious disease being declared an epidemic or pandemic, FHACT requires people covered by this Policy to:

- Take all precautions required by the appropriate authorities.
- Take any additional precautions mandated by the Council after considering appropriate medical advice.
- Take any additional personal precautions deemed necessary based on their individual situations.
- In carrying out the procedures listed below, FHACT will be guided by the information and directions provided by local health Authorities and the World Health Organisation, and its occupational health and safety obligations.

Epidemic/Pandemic Procedure

1. Responsibilities

1.1 The **President** is responsible for:

- Nominating the Epidemic Officers. The normal expectation will be that at least one member of Council will be appointed, but the President may override this if they see fit.
- The Epidemic Officers are appointed for the duration of the pandemic/epidemic.

1.2 The **Epidemic Officers** are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the organisation's Workplace Health and Safety policies are consistent with the intention of the Epidemic Policy
- Assessing the organisation's vulnerabilities, in the light of the epidemic or pandemic, to:
 - FHACT's own human resources
 - Users of FHACT's goods and services
- In the event of an epidemic or pandemic,
 - Giving notice to volunteers, members, and any persons likely to be affected that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect
 - Bringing into operation the epidemic or pandemic management procedures specified in Section 2.
 - Instituting any administrative measures necessary to reduce the impact of the vulnerabilities detailed above.
- Working with the President on the preparation of a comprehensive epidemic plan
- Advising the President on when epidemic procedures should be activated
- Familiarising volunteers and members with recommended procedures regarding epidemic avoidance
- Encouraging members to take any additional precautions based on their own circumstances.
- Working with all sectors of the organisation to identify mission-critical staff and functions
- Notifying members if they are exposed to a known instance of the pandemic/epidemic

1.3 **Library Volunteers, Admin teams and Group Co-ordinators** are responsible for:

- Ensuring that people attending the Library or their group meetings are aware of and comply with the epidemic procedures in effect at any time.

1.3 **Members, Volunteers and Visitors** are responsible for:

- Abiding by the epidemic procedures specified below, when informed by authorised personnel that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect.
- In accordance with local Health Authority requirements, notifying FHACT if they have tested positive for the pandemic/epidemic disease and have interacted with FHACT during the contagious or incubation period. The interaction may have been via a meeting, attending the Library or volunteering outside of Cook.
- Taking their own additional precautions based on their individual circumstances.

2. Procedures

The following procedures apply in the event of notice being given that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect.

2.1 Events

- The Epidemic Officers will consider on a continuing basis whether any FHACT events involving the attendance of members, volunteers or members of the public should be changed, rescheduled, or cancelled to minimise the risk of infection.

2.2 Volunteer Duties

- The Epidemic Officers will consider on a continuing basis whether:
 - it is necessary or appropriate for nominated volunteers to work from home.
 - arrangements for volunteers who work with members should be modified to minimise risks for all parties.
- FHACT may require any volunteer to provide satisfactory evidence that they are fit to return to volunteer duties.

2.3 Notification of Members

- In the case of FHACT being advised of someone at a FHACT event being diagnosed with the epidemic/pandemic disease, the Epidemic Officers will use attendance records to notify people who were at the same event of their potential exposure.

2.4 Contractors and suppliers

- The Epidemic Officers will consider on a continuing basis whether arrangements with existing contractors and suppliers need to be modified or supplemented to ensure uninterrupted service delivery.

3. Health Messaging

- 3.1 The Co-Epidemic Officers shall familiarise volunteers, members and others, as relevant, with recommended procedures on epidemic avoidance guidelines (e.g. handwashing, policies and procedures) as appropriate.

4. Related Documents

4.1 Relevant Policies

- WHS02 COVID Safe Plan - Library March 2022
- WHS03 COVID Safe Plan - Education Room March 2022
- WHS04 COVID Safe Plan – Events March 2022.
- WHS05 COVID Safe Plan- Summary of Restrictions

4.2 Relevant Procedures

- COVID Safe Library Checkers Guide – Oct 2021

- 4.3 Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza ([AHMPPi](#))
[ACT - Australian Capital Territory](#)
- 4.4 ACT Health Guidelines for COVID-19
<https://health.act.gov.au/public-health-alert/updated-information-about-covid-19>